

Notorious Princess de Chimay's Last Punishment

Everything Worth While in Life Thrown
Away, She Creeps Back to America in
Poverty Too Late to Win

Her Mother's
Forgiveness---
And Gets Only
\$1,000 from the
Millions She Hoped
to Inherit



Clara Ward in All Her Girlish Beauty Before She Became Princess de Chimay.



As She Had Developed After Her Marriage and Before She Met Rigo.



The Princess, Much More Matronly, Just Before She Left Rigo for a Railway Agent.

THE unhappy and notorious Princess de Chimay—born Clara Ward, of Detroit, Michigan, has again left America after a brief and very disappointing visit. The Princess, broken in health, both her beauty and her fortune gone, returned to seek forgiveness from her mother, who was dying.

The prodigal daughter had returned, but, alas, too late. In place of feasts and rich raiment she was met with the warning she must not appear before her mother, unless she wished to kill her. Alone, and paying this last penalty of her wilful career, the Princess remained in close hiding in New York, praying for her mother's condition to improve so that she might at least win one word with her. She was told, it is said, that her presence in America must not be made known for fear of its coming to her mother's ears and of its probable effect. The Princess obeyed. But, unexpectedly soon, her mother died. She died without ever having known that the daughter who had caused her so much unhappiness was within speaking distance!

And after she had died it was found that she had left the Princess de Chimay just one thousand dollars out of her million-and-a-half-dollar fortune. A large proportion of her money did, indeed, go to the Princess's two children by the Prince de Chimay, but this must be added sorrow for the prodigal daughter, because she is not allowed to see her children. There can be no doubt that while the once-beautiful Clara Ward crept back to America to win, if possible, her mother's forgiveness, that there was a shrewd reason for this outside of her own proper sentiments. There is little doubt she felt that if she could once show herself again in her mother's life she would receive the bulk of her fortune. In this she was disappointed.

And so, as nothing was to be gained by remaining in America, she sailed away quietly for France. It is said, a couple of weeks ago, unknown, still poor—and with the problem of how to keep body and soul together for the remaining years of her life before her.

Such is the last punishment of the once-beautiful Princess de Chimay, who had the adoration of her husband, the love of two wonderful children, the promise of a wonderful social career and a fortune large enough to have kept her in happiness all her life. But she chose to give up all the things in life worth while for a life of wantonness.

A mother's love never dies—all the centuries have proved that. But this dying mother had made her will in the English home to which her second husband had taken her, and it had done for Clara Ward all that she was deemed to merit—a pittance of \$1,000.

Many an American girl would find such a legacy a godsend, solving the knottiest problems affecting her future. To Clara Ward, who has squandered scores of thousands on pleasures of the hour, that pittance can only represent the husks earned by her prodigal acts.

For more than a dozen years the names, Clara Ward, Princess Chimay, "Madame Rigo," "Madame Ricciardi," have stood throughout Europe as symbols for nearly all that a woman ought not to be. They reflected humiliation upon the whole body of American women, for in the gay European capitals Clara Ward, Princess Chimay, was catalogued as a "type."

Her Desire to "Marry a Murderer."

Twenty years ago her position was truly enviable. No American girl had married into a more exalted social position, for Prince Chimay and Caraman was closely connected with the royal family of Belgium and was an unusually worthy member of his class. She enjoyed from the estate of her father, the multi-millionaire Michigan lumber man, an income of \$50,000 a year. Besides, the purses of her mother and a millionaire uncle were open to her almost without limit. Her beauty was dazzling, and proclaimed all over Europe. She had presented to the Prince, her husband, two charming children.

In spite of all these blessings, she was restless and discontented. It is told of Clara Ward that, as a girl of seventeen in a fashionable London school, she wrote in her diary: "The humdrum life is not for me. I must feel, must have emotions. Ordinary marriage and smug respectability appal me. I feel that it would be joy to marry a murderer."

The presence of her children could not restrain her. She began to visit Paris incognito, making the round of the gay cafes and music halls. At one of these places a "temperamental" Gypsy fiddler caught her eye and played to her with exaggerated passion. He was Jansy Rigo. Then and there he won her—as was abundantly shown in testimony given at the hearing of Prince Chimay's divorce suit.

When the Princess left her husband to go to Paris it was shown that she was accompanied by Rigo, a courier and the latter's wife. In the railway train the courier inquired whether the Princess did not regret her children. Her answer was:

"It is too late to think of them. Let us face facts and have a good dinner on reaching Paris."

Rigo had somewhere a Gypsy wife. However, she could not be expected to stand between her husband and a Princess, and she didn't. Before long it was announced that the Princess Chimay was now Madame Rigo.

As Clara Ward had "plunged" brilliantly into a coronet and aristocratic European society, she was now plunging into the opposite extreme. The path of this pair from capital to capital was strewn with money and jewels. When, in 1901, Thomas R. Lyons, her uncle in Chicago, was appointed conservator of her estate, it was shown that in seven years the former Princess Chimay had spent—mostly while in company with Rigo—\$750,000. Two years in Egypt had cost her \$150,000; six weeks in Paris, \$32,000, and so on, with such minor items as paying \$25,000 for diamond earrings and pawning them for \$4,000 and failing to redeem them.

After that the family pursestrings tightened. The Gypsy fiddler had to look for profitable engagements. In company with the ex-Princess, he was seen "polishing the pavements" in front of London music hall booking offices. The former Princess considered it her wifely duty to help boil the pot. She made large plans to go on the stage, but they never came to much. She fraternized with music hall artists. When a sketch was produced depicting the great crisis in her life, when the Princess ran away with the Gypsy fiddler, she sat with Rigo in a stage box, and was so pleased with the performance that she leaped upon the stage and embraced the leading actress.

How She Explained Her Elopement.

At about this time Clara Ward, now Madame Rigo, gave a very frank interview to an European correspondent for this newspaper. Here are some of her statements:

"The Prince was a gentleman. He was always kind, courteous, always calm.

"Heavens! I suffered after my marriage as I had suffered when I first came to Europe and my mother immured me in a convent for the sake of the discipline. I remember yet the frightful effect it had upon me. The calm quiet of the place aroused all that was worst in me. Every time I saw a gentle-faced, soft-stepping sister in sombre garb, I longed to do something to shock her. I guess I succeeded, for even as a child I was what you might call uncontrollable.

"Long before I left the convent I knew that I was beautiful. How I rejoiced the day I left there for good.

"The true cause of my elopement with Rigo lies at a King's door. I did not leave home for the sake of caprice, but because I had lost my position and was too proud to remain anywhere under sufferance. From the very first moment that I arrived in Brussels, King Leopold showered me with attentions. At last came the celebrated garden party at the palace at Laeken.

"The King neglected his guests for me. By his favoritism the jealousy and hatred of the entire court was aroused against me. I defied them, as I have all my life defied every one. The attentions of the King were pleasing to me. I encouraged them.

"At last, at a certain fete, during a moment which will live in my memory till I die, I stood alone on one of the steps of the great staircase leading to the palace conservatories.

"As I entered the great hall every woman there turned her back upon me, or gazed at me contemptuously.

"What I suffered in that moment of insulted pride no one will ever know. Then it was that I broke the strictest law of court etiquette, which demands that no one shall retire from the assembly until the Queen has left.

"An officer stood near me. I turned and asked him to give me his arm out of the palace. He refused. I left alone, banishing myself from the court forever.

"I am done with it all. I wanted to be free. I am at least out of the rotten atmosphere in which modern society lives. It does not want me, and I do not want it—so we are quits.

Every three or four years after this the beauty of the former Princess Chimay was still unimpaired, and she was still unsatisfied in her emotional nature. When she met Ricciardi, a

railway agent in Italy, she thought that it was the one to fill the void. She abandoned Rigo (or Ricciardi, proclaiming everywhere that he was her ideal, lavishing caresses upon him so publicly that the poor man was embarrassed.

At this stage of her career a brilliant French writer met her for the first time and went into printed ecstasies about her beauty of face and form. In her he declared had been discovered Nietzsche's "Overwoman." He wrote:

"The only type of Nietzsche's ideal is to be found in this little bourgeois American helress. She is a woman who knows how to draw all the force and beauty from life, and who treats with perfect disdain all the ancestral prejudices that are called habit, tradition, science, religion, altruism and moral conscience. She is Bacchic, she is Apollonic."

Her Last

Marriage and Divorce.

Rigo divorced her—having brought another American woman under the spell of his violin and his passionate, dark eyes. She married Ricciardi. Their delight in each other did not long survive. In 1911 the statement was cabled to this country that Mme. Ricciardi was about to sue for divorce from her Italian third husband.

Within the last half dozen years Clara Ward has been reported dying in poverty as a victim of disease which had robbed her of all her beauty, as engaged to go to Constantinople and dance before the Sultan. She was advertised to come to America as a music hall singer and actress—she never came. She did go to Berlin and appear in living pictures. The Berlin police decided that her beauty was not sufficiently draped. They confiscated four photographs in support of their contention.

Little has been heard about her in the last three or four years, beyond reports that she was living abroad in obscurity on meager remittances from her Chicago uncle, conservator of the remnant of her estate. At the time of her marriage to Prince Chimay she was stated to be heiress to a fortune of \$3,000,000.

At the height of the scandals concerning her the former Princess was quoted as declaring that she "hated" America and would never return. Her reappearance in this country to seek a reconciliation with her mother was made so unostentatiously that few knew of it.

And now she has gone—probably forever.



Clara Ward, soon After She Became the Princess de Chimay, Rich, Beautiful and with All Europe at Her Feet.



Rigo, the Gypsy Violinist, with Whom She Eloped, and, Below, a Curious Photograph of the Princess Showing Her at "Mock Devotions."

